

Contributions

THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH

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Much has been written upon this subject, some to edification and much has been along the line of criticism. We are compelled to admit the growth of the institution. From a little band of disciples chosen from among the Judean hills has come a mighty army, a community, a congregation of millions, from the simple truth taught by its founder.

"Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature" was the farewell injunction to his followers as they socially stood on the sacred mount, and from which he was parted from them. Slowly but surely it is pushing its way in fulfillment to the ends of the earth. God almighty will accomplish his purpose. He raises up in his own way those who are to carry out his will.

Those who accept the church of Jesus Christ are good people. They that manifest deepest interest in the rising generation, who do most to ameliorate the condition of sinful and oppressed humanity, are those who love and cultivate the precepts of the church. Hence the great necessity of bringing every one under the influence of the church.

I will quote a paragraph from a criminal judge, recently uttered in our city: "I have found in my experience in dealing with criminals that the church is a potent influence for good. If a boy has attended Sunday school, if he has a good father and a good mother who wish him to be good, nine times out of ten he will be a good man. In my experience I have never found any boy who was properly taught, a criminal. If the influence of the church is good for the individual, certainly it is good for the community. We have found also this to be true, that the countries whose people are most intelligent and whose government, most benign acknowledge Christ as their head."

What a commentary on the church, coming as it does from a man outside the church. Should not we who are members be aroused to a deeper sense of our obligations to the church, and to all that tends to build up and strengthen it? If boys having good Christian fathers and mothers, and who attend Sunday school are proof against the perniciousness of crime and escape criminality what must be the responsibility of the church member who is indifferent to the spiritual training of his sons and daughters?

I want to heartily endorse Sister Lichty's views in EVANGELIST of March 28: "The history of mankind has always proven that one sure way to ruin children is to furnish them with plenty of money and a life of ease. Who knows but many of the sad, sad wrecks that come from our prosperous Christian homes were intended by their Creator for a mighty uplifting power among men and would have been bright and shining lights, worthy of God's noblest crown, if the parents had not corrupted and ruined them by giving

them many thousands of dollars that rightly belonged to the cause of Christ?"

A sad comment, yet how true. The mission of the church is of a higher, nobler and loftier ideal than sensual indulgence begotten of wealth. The mission of the church is to bring the world to Christ, and the spirit that is to accomplish this great work must be born of God. We get a view of it in Paul's letter to the Ephesian brethren, 1:17. The eyes of our understanding need enlightening that we may conceive and realize more of what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints means. Less respectability and more sacrifice for Christ. This realized, our missions will be supported; our printing house recognized as a power among us; our College will be endowed; the ministry will be supplied; the whitened fields will be gathered; the triumphs of the church accomplished; Christ shall come to receive his own, and God shall be all in all.

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A TURBULENT WORLD

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Senator Morgan took occasion in a recent speech to comment upon the turbulent situation in the world. There was the unrest in Cuba, the racket in the Philippines, the Chinese imbroglio, the South African scrimmage, the rioting parliaments of Austria and England, and some minor clouds of dust being kicked up by disorderly people in various parts of the world. Yes, this is a turbulent world, but not near so bad as it used to be in that respect. Take for example the first six hundred years of the history of Rome. In that city was a temple in honor of Janus. Now it was a custom in regard to that temple that in time of war it should be open, but in time of peace it should be shut; and it is a historical fact that during the first six hundred years of the Roman history it was shut only seven years. Think of it, seven years of peace in six centuries. Take any of the old empires, Babylon, Greece, Egypt, Israel, mediaeval Europe, and we find that war and rapine was the rule, peace the exception. So much was war the regular business of nations that there was a usual and recognized time of the year "when kings went forth to battle." II Sam. 2:1; I Chr. 20:1. No wonder there was no development of the arts and sciences during all the centuries preceding the 19th. How could there be when the one absorbing thought of the world was war; when slaughter and robbery was the regular occupation of every vigorous man; when there was no security for either person or property anywhere; when there was no incentive for either industry or invention; when every man, woman and child was absorbed by the single idea, the one supreme necessity, of dodging destruction, well symbolized in those days by the mythical Briareus, hundred armed, and rapacious as death. Anyone familiar with history up to one hundred years ago, the history of six thousand years from the beginning of history to the

end of the Napoleonic wars, knows that the world had little or no rest, no breathing chance, no opportunity for the cultivation of the useful arts; that peace was a stranger in the earth, and brotherhood an undreamed sentiment. Why has it happened that the population of the world has increased almost or quite as much in the last hundred years as it did in any two thousand before? It is because, as some one tersely stated it not long since; that only for the last fifty or one hundred years has the world been fit for a decent man to live in. He might have amplified that statement by saying that until the last hundred years it was only possible for a bully to live in the world at all. As for quiet, peaceable people, Paul stated their case when he said: "We are killed all the day long." In other words, the savage turbulence of the world, and the universal riot of the most evil passions thru-out all nations and during all the centuries previous to the last one or two, presented conditions in the midst of which a rapid increase of population accompanied by any considerable development of the arts was impossible. The favorable conditions of the last two centuries, and more particularly of the century just closed, has resulted in the magic and imperial expansion of the race in every direction of magnificent progress. Those who think that they see evidences of retrogression and depravity at the present time, in excess of all former times, forget that they compare the full record of fifteen hundred millions of human beings, which they get in the daily paper, with the meager record of five hundred millions of that halcyon "former time," whose halcyonic glow exists principally in an indulgent imagination. But more to the point, they ignore history, or have never read its lesson of uninterrupted and unparalleled horrors. For example the English army is now charged with the burning of the homes of the South African Boers. Now let them add to this the total extermination of the Boers themselves, then let them lead the women and children into a perpetual slavery more brutal and degrading than the recent slavery of the American negro, then instead of confining this human operation to a little corner of the world let it be carried on continuously, and in every quarter of the world at rapidly recurring periods, then add to this the bitter serfdom of the poor in their own country, who tilled the lands of the feudal lord, fought his battles and filled his harems; then to this add the universal religious intolerance which exhausts the ingenuity of devils to invent tortures for the faithful Christian, fire, sword, dungeon, wild beast, confiscation, the whole catalog of horrors; then add to this the political and judicial tyranny which condemned and executed men and women without a hearing, without trial, without knowing what charges were brought against them; and so go on increasing this list until the brain is weary and the heart is sick, and you may possibly catch some faint glimpse of those blessed former